

Statewide News Release

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State Agencies Issue Two Fish Consumption Advisories in Pike County

FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 5, 2007) -- The Kentucky Departments for Public Health, Environmental Protection and Fish and Wildlife today issued fish consumption advisories due to elevated PCB and mercury levels for two bodies of water in Pike County: Knox Creek and Fishtrap Lake, including the portion of the Levisa Fork River above the lake to the Virginia state boundary in Pike County.

These advisories are intended to inform the public about the possible risks of eating unrestricted amounts of some fish from these locations. This advisory is based on the waters that flow from Virginia into Kentucky, and are similar to advisories that have already been issued by Virginia officials.

Women of childbearing age and children are particularly susceptible to contaminants such as PCB and mercury that build up in the body. For this reason, these individuals should follow the *special population* advisory.

"Because they are generally low in fat and high in protein, and contain a number of vitamins and minerals, health experts agree that fish can be part of a healthy, balanced diet," said William D. Hacker, M.D., public health commissioner and acting undersecretary for health in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. "Fish are an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids, which are important to cardiovascular health and fetal brain development. The key to healthy fish consumption is moderation, particularly for those who might be harmed by ingesting high levels of mercury or PCBs, such as women of child-bearing age and children."

"This risk-based advisory system allows our citizens to have the information they need in making good nutrition decisions," said Guy Delius, assistant director in the Division of Public Health Protection and Safety,

"Fish are fun to catch, and many fishermen now practice 'catch and release,' which helps ensure our lakes and rivers have good populations of larger, higher quality fish. If you decide to keep and eat your catch, just keep in mind the frequency for consumption. Fish are a nutritious, low-fat food and good for you when eaten in moderation," said Benjy Kinman, director of fisheries with the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Cooking may reduce some contaminants in fish, but will not reduce mercury levels.

The monitoring of tissue residue levels in fish from bodies of water across the state is an ongoing program of the state agencies.

To better protect the public, state scientists have developed a specific protocol to determine safety levels and risk for contaminants. The following are consumption precautions for various tested species in the two bodies of water. If a species is not listed, this does not mean these other fish species are risk-free to consumers. Rather, it means there is no data available for that particular species.

2007 Fish Consumption Advisories for Knox Creek and Fishtrap Lake in Pike County, Ky.

Knox Creek (New Advisory)

There are approximately 7.8 miles of Knox Creek in Pike County. The headwaters of Knox Creek are located predominantly in Buchanan County, Va. Virginia issued a similar fish consumption advisory for its section of this creek.

Advisory boundaries:

This fish consumption advisory will include all of Knox Creek from the Virginia-Kentucky state line to the Tug Fork River.

Advisory for Knox Creek:

Fish Group	General Population	Special Population	Contaminant(s)
Black Bass	1 meal per month	6 meals per year	PCB, Mercury
Crappie/Rock Bass	1 meal per month	6 meals per year	PCB, Mercury
Catfish/Drum	6 meals per year	No Consumption	PCB
Flathead Catfish	No Consumption	No Consumption	PCB, Mercury

Fishtrap Lake (New Advisory)

Fishtrap Lake is approximately 1,100 acres and impounds the Levisa Fork River in Pike County.

Advisory boundaries:

This advisory will include the Levisa Fork River from the Kentucky-Virginia state line to the dam on Fishtrap Lake. Virginia issued a similar fish consumption advisory for a portion of the Levisa Fork River in its state.

Advisory for Fishtrap Lake:

Fish Groups	General Population	Special Population	Contaminant(s)*
Black Bass	1 meal per week	1 meal per month	PCB, Mercury
White Bass	1 meal per month	6 meals per year	PCB, Mercury
Catfish/Drum	1 meal per month	6 meals per year	PCB, Mercury
Suckers/Carp	1 meal per month	6 meals per year	PCB, Mercury
Flathead Catfish	1 meal per week	1 meal per month	PCB, Mercury

* Neither of these contaminants is associated with the Consol Energy, Inc., brine discharge at Grundy, Va.